

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05

EB-07 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 SAJ-01

ACDA-05 /097 W

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O R 251630Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2296

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION OECD PARIS

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, ECIN, XF, IT

SUBJECT: US/EC CONSULTATIONS: EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE; ROME

MEETING OF EXPERTS

REF: A) ROME 10641; B) DUBLIN 1056

SUMMARY: THE EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE'S "JOINT STEERRING COMMITTEE" ON JULY 24 TERMINATED SUCCESSFUL THREE DAY WORKING SESSION, WITH SATISFACTORY SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS, AND POLITICIZATION HELD WITHIN REASONABLE BOUNDS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN CAREFUL BRIEFING MORNING JULY 25 MINISTER BARTOLOMEIO ATTOLICO (OFFICER DIRECTOR, ME POLITICAL AFFAIRS) COVERED DEVELOPMENTS OF JULY 23 AND 24. ALL WORKING GROUPS LABORED "HARD AND WELL AND MADE GOOD PROGRESS." COPIES OF DOCUMENTS OUTLINING WORK PROGRAMS IN EACH GROUP (REF. B) BEING POUCHED DEPARTMENT FOR SUCH FURTHER DISTRIBUTION AS MAY BE DESIRED.

2. THE UNDERLYING POLITICAL ISSUE WAS SUPPRESSED, BUT DIDN'T GO AWAY. IT SURFACED, FOR EXAMPLE, IN FINAL JOINT COMMUNIQUE AND TEXT OF "JOINT WORKING PAPER" (JWP). ALTHOUGH COMMUNIQUE NOTES THAT "BOTH SIDES RECOMMEND A MEETING OF ARAB AND EUROPEAN EXPERTS SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN AN ARAB CITY IN NOVEMBER 1975", THE PARTIES ALSO RECALLED (JWP) THAT IN CAIRO IN JUNE THEY HAD AGREED THAT THE "PRESENT MEETING OF EXPERTS WILL BE RESUMED PERIODICALLY IN THE FORM OF A STEERING COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS PENDING THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE WHICH IS DESIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE." FOR EMPHASIS THE JWP REPEATS THAT IT IS "CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT A MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE IS DESIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE" ALTHOUGH THE NEXT SESSION WILL BE OF EXPERTS."

3. ACCORDING TO ATTOLICO, THE ARAB SIDE PUSHED FOR INCLUSION IN THE COMMUNIQUE OR JWP OF A JOINT RECOMMENDATION THAT A MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE SHOULD TAKE PLACE BUT WITH NO DATE SPECIFIED. THE RATIONALE ADVANCED WAS THAT TECHNICAL COOPERATION SHOULD PROCEED APACE WITH GROWING POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING. EUROPEAN SIDE "REFUSED TO ADHERE" TO THIS RECOMMENDATION BECAUSE A) THE TIME WAS "NOT RIGHT" TO CALL FOR

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A MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE IN THE LIGHT OF "CIRCUMSTANCES" OUTSIDE THE CONTROL OF DIALOGUE PARTICIPANTS AND B)(CONTRADICTORILY) BECAUSE PARTICIPANTS WERE MERE "EXPERTS" AND NOT QUALIFIED TO DETERMINE WHEN TIME IS RIGHT -- THAT MUST BE LEFT TO GOVERNMENTS.

4. WHILE REFUSING TO JOIN IN A CALL FOR A MEETING OF GENERAL COMMITTEE, EUROPEAN SIDE FELT IT COULD NOT DECLINE TO REPEAT THE JUNE CAIRO FORMULATION ("A MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

IS DESIRED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE"), AND AGREED TO REPEATING IT IN THE JWP. HOWEVER, ATTOLICO POINTED OUT THAT SUCH REPETITION DOES NOT RPT NOT COMPROMISE A CALL FOR CONVENING THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

5. ARABS WERE A BIT MIFFED AT EUROPEAN STANCE AND SAID ARAB AGREEMENT TO NEXT MEETING ("IN AN ARAB CITY" AT EXPERT LEVEL) WILL FIRST HAVE TO HAVE THE APPROVAL OF THE ARAB LEAGUE COUNCIL MEETING IN SEPTEMBER. THUS, WORDING OF THE COMMUNIQUE(PARA. 2 ABOVE) COMPRIMES A RECOMMENDATION RATHER THAN A DECISION.

6. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, ATTOLICO ADDED THAT HE HAD HAD FEELING THAT ARAB INTEREST IN GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING WAS NOT RELATED TO PLO ISSUE BUT RATHER TO ESCALATE THE "LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE" BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES BY MOVING UP FROM THE TECHNICAL LEVEL. HE SPECULATED, IN PASSING BUT PERHAPS NOT IDLY, THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO IMAGINE A FORMULA WHICH WOULD PERMIT OF A GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING AT A FAIRLY SENIOR LEVEL BUT STILL UNDER THE "NO-LABEL", TWO-SIDES-ONLY APPROACH. UNDOUBTEDLY ARABS WOULD LOOK ON A GENERAL COMMITTEE SESSION AS AT LEAST PARTIALLY A POLITICAL FORUM, BUT THAT THE EUROPEANS WOULD NOT, HE SAID. THUS, IRONICALLY, WHILE EUROPEANS MUST AND OD TELL THE ARABS THAT THEY CONSIDER THE TECHNICAL LEVEL MEETINGS AS "TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENTS WHICH DO NOT PREJUDICE THE INSTITUTIONAL MACHINERY" ORIGINALLY PROPOSED (BY THE EUROPEANS), THE EUROPEAN SIDE, SO FAR AT LEAST, HAS BEEN CONSTRAINED TO DODGE ITS OWN PROPOSED GENERAL COMMITTEE FORMAT AND THE POLITICAL TRAPS BUILT INTO IT.

7. ACCORDING TO ALL WE LEARN SO FAR, PLO REPRESENTATIVES WERE QUIET, SERIOUS AND HARDWORKING. NOT GRATUITOUSLY IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS PLO, THEY ALSO MADE NO ATTEMPT TO CONCEAL THE AFFILIATION IN CONVERSATIONS, THEY PRESUMABLY ARE ANXIOUS TO MAKE A SUCCESS OF THIS COLLECTIVE EFFORT; IF THE DIALOGUE BREAKS CONFIDENTIAL

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UP AND REVERTS TO BILATERAL CHANNELS, THE PLO IS AGAIN OUTSIDE, LOOKING IN.

8. LIBYA STAYED AWAY THROUGHOUT; ALGERIA AND IRAQ ARRIVED, LATE BUT WELCOME. VOLPE

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